ALNWICK URBAN DISTRICT

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

AND PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

1969

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A N N U A L R E P O R T

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

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To the Chairman and Members of the Alnwick Urban District Council

Vital Statistics There were 106 births in the District in 1969 compared with 97 in 1968 and although this shows an increase the adjusted birth rate remains below that for England and Wales. In the past ten years the national birth rate rose to a peak in 1964 and progressively declined thereafter. Similar changes occurred in the rates in Alnwick but prior to 1964 the yearly rates were higher than the national ones whilst since 1964 the rates have been lower. This presents a comparable pattern but with greater swings.

The sex ratio (the number of boys born compared to the number of girls) was 108/100 in 1969 and this is marginally above the national ratio. In Alnwick in the preceding ten years there had been 613 male births and 549 female births - a ratio of 112/100. Nationally there are now more males than females in all age groups up to 40 years of age. Until recent years the reverse was the case and there had always been an excess of females as a result of male infant mortality and war. It is interesting to speculate what bearing this reversal may have in the causation of increased violence and crime.

The estimate of the mid-year population showed an increase of 10 persons to 7,900.

Total deaths numbered 81 in 1969, one fewer than in 1968. There were no unusual causes and the commoner causes such as ischaemic heart disease and malignancies were in the expected proportions. There was one infant and no maternal deaths.

Immunisation The acceptance rates for primary immunisation of infants were slightly lower than in 1968 and cannot be considered altogether satisfactory. These rates are below the national ones. It is surprising that there should be a big drop in the proportion of infants vaccinated against poliomyelitis - 72% in 1968 but only 47% in 1969. This vaccine is easily given by mouth, causes no bodily disturbance, and offers almost certain protection. It is usually given at the same time as inoculation against diphtheria etc.

Infectious Diseases The outbreak of infective hepatitis was discussed in detail in the report for 1968 which gave the position up to mid 1969. There were altogether 104 cases of the disease during the year. The first case in Alnwick was notified in August 1968 and the last in March 1970 so that the duration was eighteen months and the total number of cases notified was 121. The first case was in a woman aged 71 years and the last in a boy of 9 years. A case occurred in a residential centre for subnormal children and presented some risk of an outbreak because infective hepatitis is a particular hazard to closed communities. All other children and members of staff were given protective injections of gamma globulin and no further cases occurred.

There were no new cases of tuberculosis reported and no food poisoning. There was only one case of measles in what had been expected to be an epidemic year and the introduction of active vaccination in 1968 must have had a considerable bearing on this.

One case of meningitis occurred in an infant but the organism responsible was not one which produces epidemic disease.

Housing Listed in the report are the housing improvements made during the year and the prospective clearance of unfit housing over the next few years.

Mention must be made of the opening of the old people's housing scheme at Augur Place, with its community centre, and atribute paid to the resident warden. This has been of great benefit to the old people involved and has enabled some of them to remain in the community when it might not otherwise have been possible. As reported during the year there would appear to be a need for a further similar scheme as there are more old people in the town living alone who could benefit and, additionally, it could release larger houses for young families.

The views of old people themselves are often not heard in this matter and those expressed at a recent meeting of representatives of Over-60 Clubs in North Northumberland are of interest. These indicated that they would prefer old people's housing schemes where they could have "peace and quiet"; they would like two bedrooms (one for visitors) in early retirement and single bedroomed housing in the later seventies and eighties; they would accept that it involved two removals and would be prepared to undergo this; they would like central heating but were worried about possible increased cost; and they would prefer showers as opposed to baths.

Ian G.P. Fraser

Medical Officer of Health

GENERAL STATISTICS

The area of the district was 4,778 acres.

The number of inhabited houses was 2,519 and the number of new houses completed during the year was 31.

The estimated mid-year population was 7,900, this figure was taken when calculating the birth and death rate.

VITAL STATISTICS

Live Births	Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	50	46	96
Illegitimate	5	5	10
Totals	55	51	106

Crude Birth Rate per 1,000 of the population	13.4
Crude Birth Rate multiplied by Comparability Factor	15.0
Illegitimate live births per cent of total live births	9

Stillbirths			
Legitimate	1	1	2
Illegitimate	-	-	-
Totals	1	1	2

Stillbirth Rate per 1,000 total live and still births	19
Total Live and Still Births	108

Infant Deaths (Deaths under one year)			
Legitimate	1	-	1
Illegitimate	-	-	-
Totals	1	-	1

Infant Mortality Rates	
Total infant deaths per 1,000 total live births	9
Legitimate infant deaths per 1,000 legitimate live births	10
Illegitimate infant deaths per 1,000 illegitimate live births	-

Neo-natal Mortality Rate	
Deaths under four weeks per 1,000 total live births	-

Early Neo-natal Mortality Rate

Deaths under one week per 1,000 total live births	-

Perinatal Mortality Rate

Stillbirths and deaths under one week combined per 1,000 total live and still births	19

Maternal Mortality (including abortion)

Number of deaths	-
Rate per 1,000 total live and still births	-

	Males	Females	Total
Deaths	47	34	81
Crude Death Rate per 1,000 population			10.3
Crude Death Rate multiplied by Comparability Factor			11.5

CAUSES OF DEATH

Other Infective and Parasitic Diseases	-	1	1
Malignant Neoplasm - Stomach	3	-	3
Malignant Neoplasm - Intestine	1	2	3
Malignant Neoplasm - Prostate	1	-	1
Other Malignant Neoplasms	2	4	6
Avitaminoses, etc.	-	1	1
Hypertensive Disease	1	1	2
Ischaemic Heart Disease	12	9	21
Other Forms of Heart Disease	5	4	9
Cerebrovascular Disease	8	6	14
Other Diseases of Circulatory System	2	1	3
Influenza	1	-	1
Pneumonia	2	1	3
Bronchitis and Emphysema	5	1	6
Cirrhosis of Liver	1	-	1
Other Diseases of Digestive System	-	1	1
Motor Vehicle Accidents	2	-	2
All Other Accidents	1	2	3
Totals	47	34	81

NOTIFIED INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Measles	1
Infective Hepatitis	104
Meningitis	1

INFANT MORTALITY

1930 - 1969

Year	Number of Infant Deaths	Rate per 1,000 Live Births	Infant Mortality England and Wales
1930	5	42.7	60
1931	7	68.3	66
1932	9	92.8	64
1933	7	60.9	63
1934	5	45.0	59
1935	3	27.8	57
1936	6	56.6	59
1937	Record Incomplete	40.0	58
1938	5	57.5	53
1939	Record Incomplete	-	51
1940	7	72.9	57
1941)		100.0	60
1942)	Record Incomplete	44.6	51
1943)		46.7	49
1944	4	35.7	45
1945	9	74.6	46
1946	8	59.4	43
1947	11	62.5	41
1948	10	55.2	34
1949	4	30.6	32
1950	1	7.7	30
1951	1	8.8	30
1952	2	15.1	28
1953	4	24.3	27
1954	5	24.6	25
1955	3	20.8	25
1956	3	21.9	24
1957	4	29.0	23
1958	2	16.0	22
1959	1	7.7	22
1960	3	21.6	21
1961	1	8.1	21
1962	9	64.3	21
1963	-	-	21
1964	2	15.7	21
1965	-	-	19
1966	3	26.4	19
1967	1	11.1	18
1968	1	10.3	18
1969	1	9.0	18

IMMUNISATION

NORTH NO.2 AREA

Disease	Primary Immunisation			Reinforcing Doses		
	Under 4	4-15	Total	Under 4	4-15	Total
Diphtheria	273	8	281	200	359	559
Whooping Cough	272	8	280	122	88	210
Tetanus	273	17	290	202	425	627
Polio	203	5	208	185	349	534
Measles	190	109	299	-	-	-

	Primary Vaccination			Revaccination		
	Under 5	5-15	Total	Under 5	5-15	Total
Smallpox	267	15	282	4	18	22

There were 428 live births in the area during 1969 and the number of primary immunisations of children under 4 years of age (smallpox - under 5 years) have been expressed as percentages of this figure.

Diphtheria	-	64%
Whooping Cough	-	64%
Tetanus	-	64%
Polio	-	47%
Smallpox	-	62%

B.C.G. Vaccination against Tuberculosis

Alnwick U.D.	142
Alnwick R.D.	75
Amble U.D.	-
Rothbury R.D.	18
Totals	235

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HOUSING

(a) STATISTICS

New houses completed during the year	With State Assistance	Unaided	Total
(a) By Local Authority	7	-	7
(b) By Other Housing Authority	-	-	-
(c) By Private Persons	-	24	24

Total number of inhabited houses in district	2519
Total number of houses owned by the Local Authority	1160

Closing and Demolitions	Number of Houses
1. Houses demolished in Clearance Areas	-
2. Houses demolished not in Clearance Areas (Number of dwellings included above previously reported as "closed" - NIL)	6
3. Houses closed, not demolished	1
4. Houses permanently discontinued as dwellings and not included in the above	-

Repairs - Houses made fit	
5. By informal action	2
6. By owners, following statutory notice	-
7. By local authority in default of owners	-
8. Demolition Orders revoked after reconstruction	-

Slum Clearance Programme 1970 - 73

Housing Act 1957

		1970	1971	1972	1973
Part III	Houses to be cleared	6	25	38	-
Part II	Houses likely to be subject to demolition or closing orders	16	3	-	24

Improvement Grants	Number of separate houses
(a) Discretionary Grants	
1. Applications submitted to Local Authority during the year	9
2. Applications rejected	-
3. Applications approved	9
4. Approximate average grant approved per house during year	
Pre 1969 Act	£235.3.0.
1969 Act	£889.10.0.
5. Total number of houses approved for grant since inception of scheme	152

(b) Standard Grants	During the Year	Total to Date
1. Number of separate houses for which grants have been made	10	67
2. Number of houses so provided with		
(a) Bath or shower	9	51
(b) Wash-hand basin	9	52
(c) Hot water supply	7	46
(d) Water Closet	9	58
(e) Food store	4	39
(f) Sink	2	2

(b) GENERAL

Chapel Lands

23 private houses, comprising 16 - three bedroom houses and 7 two bedroom bungalows were completed by Messrs. R. Carse & Sons Ltd. 3 Houses were under construction at the end of the year and 57 of the 60 houses in the scheme are now occupied.

Augur Flats

This scheme was renamed Augur Place. The erection of 6 bungalows, wardens house and offices was completed by Messrs. R. Carse & Sons Ltd., and a warden appointed. Work on the improvement of the 10 existing houses commenced after the erection of the bungalows etc. This work entailed the provision of gas fired central heating, new kitchenette, sink unit and food store, and the provision of shower and internal W.C. Seven of these houses were completed and tenants rehoused by the end of the year.

Slum Clearance

Circular 92/69 (Ministry of Housing and Local Government) is concerned with the clearance of unfit houses, and the Ministry accordingly ask all local housing authorities what can and might be done to clear remaining slums, and to inform them by 31st January 1970 what their programmes for the next four years are to be.

This information was supplied and figures are shown in the statistics on previous page. Included in the number of houses to be cleared is the 50 prefabricated dwellings owned by the local authority, 25 of which are to be dealt with in 1971 and the

remainder in 1972. Also scheduled for clearance is the Dodds Lane area. It is considered that the remainder of the unfit properties can be dealth with as "individual unfit houses", other than a few houses in the Hotspur Street/ Hotspur Place area which may, after detailed inspections, be included in a clearance area.

(c) REGISTERED COMMON LODGING HOUSES

There are none in the district.

(d) HOUSES ERECTED — HOUSES DEMOLISHED OR CLOSED

Year	By Private Persons	By Local Authority	By other Housing Authorities	Total	Demolished	Houses or Parts closed	Total	
1957	7	64	-	71	5	3	8	N.B.
1958	4	-	-	4	12	2	14	11 dwellings
1959	6	-	1	7	10	-	10	reported as "Closed"
1960	21	-	-	21	22	2	24	have since been
1961	23	11	-	34	5	2	7	demolished and are
1962	25	21	-	46	31	6	37	included in figures.
1963	4	19	-	23	24	9	33	2 Closing Orders
1964	1	33	3	37	15	2	17	revoked.
1965	1	31	-	32	3	7	10	
1966	-	2	-	2	7	6	13	
1967	12	-	1	13	10	1	11	
1968	22	37	1	60	5	-	5	
1969	24	7	-	31	6	1	7	
Total	150	225	6	381	155	41	196	

WATER SUPPLY

The area is served by the Newcastle and Gateshead Water Company, who maintained a plentiful and wholesome supply throughout the year.

The service is adequate and satisfactory.

Water is obtained from the Coquet Water Board, and the Half Moon Springs. Both supplies are filtered and chlorinated.

A new chlorine plant has been installed at the Staigs Garth pumping station

The Company readily investigate any complaints, and effect a remedy.

Cottages on Alnwick Moor are supplied by the Freemens Council and this water, whilst untreated, has remained wholesome over the year.

RESULTS OF WATER SAMPLES (BACTERIOLOGICAL)

Source of Supply	Whether water treated or untreated	Satisfactory Class 1	Satisfactory Class 11	Suspicious Class 111	Unsatis-factory Class 1V
Alnwick Low Supply (C.W.B.)	Treated	9	-	-	-
Alnwick High Supply	Treated	11	-	-	-
Freemen's Supply	Untreated	2	-	-	-

The number of dwelling houses, and the number of the population supplied from public water mains are as follows:-

	Number of Dwelling Houses	Populations Supplied
(a) Direct to House	2434	7820
(b) By means of stand pipes	8	16

SEWARAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL

There were no major works carried out to the existing sewers, or to the Sewage Disposal Plant and the arrangements for sewerage and sewage disposal in the district are reasonably adequate.

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1955

(a) MILK

Dealers licences are granted by the Northumberland County Council as the food and drugs authority, and regular sampling was carried out by the County Public Health Inspector.

There is no untreated milk bottled in the district, and there are no producers in the area selling raw milk, consequently there were no samples of raw milk examined for Brucella Abortus.

RESULTS OF SAMPLES (BACTERIOLOGICAL)

Designation	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Untreated	2	-
Treated	33	1

1 sample of pasteurised milk taken at Alnwick R.C. School failed to pass the methylene blue test, but satisfied the phosphatase test.

(b) FOOD HYGIENE (GENERAL) REGULATIONS, 1960

FOOD PREMISES SUBJECT TO FOOD HYGIENE (GEN) REGULATIONS 1960

CATEGORIES OF TRADE PREMISES

	Number of Premises	Number fitted to comply with Reg. 16	Number to which Reg. 19 applies	Number fitted to comply with Reg. 19
Grocers, Self Service Stores General Dealers and Confectioners	32	32	10	10
Cafes, Snack Bars, School Kitchens, Boarding House, Hospital Kitchens	24	24	24	24
Public Houses, Hotels and Social Clubs	21	19	21	21
Butchers and Fishmongers	8	8	8	8
Fruiterers	4	4	-	-
Chemists	5	5	-	-
Fried Fish and Chips	4	4	4	4
Bakeries	3	3	3	3
Off Licence Premises	2	2	-	-
Ice Cream Manufacturers	1	1	1	1
Totals	104	102	71	71

74 visits were made to the 104 food premises and contraventions or deficiences found were brought to the notice of the food traders concerned.

There were no prosecutions during the year under the Regulations.

(c) POULTRY INSPECTION

There are no poultry processing premises within the district.

(d) FOOD INSPECTION (OTHER THAN FRESH CARCASE MEAT AT SLAUGHTERHOUSES)

22 visits were made to food premises for the primary purpose of food inspection. The following were voluntarily surrendered and destroyed at the East Cawledge Park Refuse Tip:-

Canned Vegetables	226 lbs.	Canned Milk & Milk Products	9 lbs.
Canned Fruit	98 lbs.	Quick frozen foods	96 lbs.
Canned Meat & Fish	52 lbs.	Bacon	40 lbs.

SLAUGHTERHOUSES

There are two private slaughterhouses in the district. 18 slaughtering licences were issued to slaughtermen. Refuse from the slaughterhouses is removed by the Council twice weekly for a sum of £2.2.0. per week.

Under the Meat Inspection Regulations a total sum of £112.14.3. was paid by the butchers for meat inspection, as against a total sum of £115.2.0. for the previous year. 100% inspection of all carcases was made and I am indebted to Mr. J.A. Rodgett, Surveyor and Public Health Inspector, Amble U.D.C., and Mr. J.A. Staig, Public Health Inspector, Alnwick R.D.C., for meat inspection duties carried out during my absence.

No cysticercosis or tuberculosis was found.

225 visits were made to the slaughterhouses for meat inspection.

CARCASES AND OFFAL INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED IN WHOLE OR PART

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep & Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	511	13	5	1458	282
Number inspected	511	13	5	1458	282
All diseases					
Whole carcases condemned	-	2	-	4	-
Part " "	4	1	-	6	2
Offal condemned	99	3	-	48	28
Percentage of number inspected affected with disease	20.1	46.1	-	3.9	10.6

Total weight of carcase meat and offal condemned - 1971 lbs.

RODENT CONTROL

The Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949, imposes on a Local Authority the duty of keeping its district free from rats and mice, and for this purpose a part time rodent operator is employed for approximately 20/22 hours per week.

All treatments are given free of charge.

There was a 15% reduction in the number of premises found to be infested and treated in comparison with the previous year, when a 20% reduction was reported. There were no major infestations found, practically all notifications being those of a light infestation, encouraged, no doubt, by putting out food for birds. No difficulties were encountered, other than complete clearance at the East Cawledge Park refuse tip.

One sewer treatment was carried out and 45 manholes baited. Only 2 part takes were recorded, and further baiting at both these manholes revealed no take.

Properties other than Sewers	Type of Property	
	Non-Agricultural	Agricultural
1. Number of properties in district	3145	22
2. (a) Total number of properties (including nearby premises) inspected following notification	162	10
(b) Number infested by (1) Rats	30	4
(11) Mice	9	-
3. (a) Total number of properties inspected for rats and/or mice for reasons other than notification	40	6
(b) Number infested by (1) Rats	3	2
(11) Mice	-	-

PIGEONS

During the year 1136 feral pigeons were destroyed, 524 by trapping and 612 by shooting.

4 traps were in operation throughout the year, whilst the shooting period was confined to fourteen days. Obviously better results were obtained by shooting, but this can only be carried out in certain parts of the town with safety.

Despite the fact that 1869 pigeons have been destroyed in the last three years, there are still small flocks of pigeons roosting in some of the old delapidated buildings, such buildings are providing ideal roosting places for feral pigeons.

OFFICES, SHOPS AND RAILWAY PREMISES ACT, 1963

REGISTRATION AND INSPECTION

Four new premises were registered during the year, but the total number of registered premises at the end of the year remained the same as in the previous year, due to closure of premises and persons ceasing to become employed.

New occupiers of premises made no effort to register the premises until visits were made and forms left for completion.

The increase in the number of persons employed is due to the transfer of the Post Office to the local authority for enforcement of the Act.

General Inspections have now been made to all offices, other than the Post Office, and to all retail shops, other than newly registered premises, All other premises have received General Inspections except for a few public houses where inspections have been made under the Food Hygiene (General) Regulations and no contraventions were found.

OPERATION OF THE GENERAL PROVISIONS OF THE ACT

The nature of the contraventions were similar to those of previous years, the most common being the absence of thermometers, abstracts of the Act, and First Aid equipment. A common defect of previous years, lack of

lighting to external water closets has been remedied by the provision of electric lighting. Additional supply of drinking water was provided in two cases where the existing supply was found in too close proximity to water closets. A general inspection carried out at a small shop comprising sales room only, revealed the lack of sanitary accommodation, and washing facilites. The room, not a food room, was clean and well lighted and ventilated, but the sole means of heating was by an offensive smelling paraffin stove. 1 female was employed, but this person has now been placed on part time work comprising 18 hours per week, so that registration of premises is no longer applicable. The paraffin stove has now been superceeded by an electric fire. I propose to keep a separate register of premises where persons are employed for less than 21 hours per week, as the number of such premises is increasing.

Contraventions of the Act are brought to the notice of the employers, either by interview or written notice, after which follow up visits are made.

ACCIDENTS

One accident was reported, and this concerned a youth, age 19 years, who whilst burning refuse in the yard of a retail multiple grocers shop, stood on a nail and injured his right foot. No further action was taken.

EXEMPTIONS

There were no applications received and no exemptions granted in relation to (1) space (2) temperature (3) sanitary conveniences (4) running water.

PROSECUTIONS

There were no prosecutions instituted.

REGISTRATION, GENERAL INSPECTIONS AND PERSONS EMPLOYED

Class of Premises	Number of Premises Registered during the year	Total Number of Registered premises at end of year	General Inspections carried out	Persons Employed
Offices	1	48	10	335
Retail shops	3	104	32	366
Wholesale shops, warehouses	-	3	2	9
Catering establishments open to the public, canteens	-	14	8	90
Totals	4	169	52	800
		TOTAL MALES TOTAL FEMALES	306 494	

FACTORIES ACT 1961

1. Inspections

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(1) Factories in which Secs. 1. 2. 3. 4 &6 are to be enforced by the Local Authority	-	-	-	-
(2) Factories not included in (1) in which Sec.7 is enforced by the Local Authority	40	16	1	-
(3) Other premises in which Sec. 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises)	10	8	1	-
Totals	50	24	2	-

2. Defects Found

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred To H.M. Inspector	Referred By H.M. Inspector	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Want of Cleanliness (S.1)	-	-	-	-	-
Overcrowding (S.2)	-	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	-	-	-	-	-
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	-	-	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	-	-	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)					
(a) Insufficient	-	-	-	-	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective	2	2	-	-	-
(c) Not separate for sexes	-	-	-	-	-
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to outwork)	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	2	2	-	-	-

3. Outwork

There were no outworkers notified.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND HOUSING ACTS
NOTICES SERVED

	Informal	Complied with	Statutory	Complied with	Executed in default by Local Authority
Public Health Act, 1936					
Sec. 39 - drainage	3	3	-	-	-
45 - W.C.'s	2	2	-	-	-
75 - Dustbins	1	1	-	-	-
Housing Act, 1957					
Sec. 9 - Repairs	2	2	-	-	-
Totals	8	8	-	-	-

Public Health Acts

Blocked drains cleared	3
Houses disinfested re. vermin	5
Wasps nests destroyed	11